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Office of Program Resources Management

(632) 552-9907

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## NEWS HEADLINES

**ZAMBOANGA**  
**Today**  
THE MOST READ NEWSPAPER IN ZAMBOANGA PENINSULA

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### Zambo: no place for trafficking—US envoy

by Mon Follosco

“ZAMBOANGA CITY is not a place for trafficking... Not welcome, not permitted,” said United States Ambassador Kristie Kenney during her keynote address on the Inauguration and Turn-over of the Halfway House (Bahay Silungan Sa Daungan) in the port of Zamboanga yesterday. The American envoy

*Zambo: / p.2*

**Zambo...**  
was in Asia's Latin City yesterday for the inauguration and the ceremonial cutting of the ribbon of the 2.7-million pesos Halfway house, funded by the United States Agency for International Development-Growth with Equity in Mindanao (USAID-GEM).  
At said inauguration, Ambassador Kenney also commended City Mayor Celso Lobregat and its people and stressed that “I always feels like home and to start a new year in Zamboanga City is a hopeful act.”  
*Zambo: / p.12*

**Zambo...**  
She also challenged the members of the press who “can help not only to be protected but to enjoy the economic opportunities, attracting investment,” despite the difficulties in today's globalized world.

Mayor Lobregat emphasized in his message that “the city government of Zamboanga is one of the first local government units (LGU) in the country that responded to the call for the creation of an Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking that mirrors the national council. This body gathers different LGU's and agencies involved in trafficking to work closely in pursuing trafficking in person cases.”  
Lobregat said, “Today marks another milestone in the fight against human trafficking. This event boosts collaborative efforts of government and NGO's in eradicating human trafficking and in giving justice to victims and their families.”  
The Mayor applauded the Visayan Forum Foundation, Inc. (VFFI) headed by Ma. Cecilia Flores-Oebanda for paving the way for the establishment of the halfway center. And thanked the USAID for their assistance and gratitude through her

Excellency Ambassador Kristie Kenney, the Hija de Zamboanga, for gracing the occasion.

Philippine Port Authority Manager Leonilo Miele said, on his welcome remarks that “this is another major milestone to fight the growing menace of trafficking...”  
Ma. Cecilia Flores-Oebanda accepted the Symbolic Key from the Philippine Ports Authority and said that “this key is not only a symbol of physical operation of a center but it is also a symbol of the start of a great war against human trafficking in one of the most critical battlegrounds against human trafficking in the country, in the port of Zamboanga.”  
“Let's make 2008 that citizens are most vulnerable to enjoy the benefits of life. Halfway house offers victims to regain their dignity,” she said (*Mon Follosco*)